



Rockport Millbrook Meadow Committee

Town Hall, Rockport, MA 01966

Charmaine Blanchard
Kimberly Jones
Shannon Mason, Vice Chair
John Sparks

Samuel W. Coulbourn, Chair
Marcia Lombardo, Treasurer
Barbara Sparks
Frederick H. Tarr III

Minutes of Fund-Raising Subcommittee, Wed., February 12, 2014, 7:00 p.m., Trustees' Room, Rockport Public Library

7:40 p.m. Chairwoman **Shannon Mason** called the meeting to order, and announced that this meeting had not been posted, so it was not official. Members present: **Shannon Mason, Marcia Lombardo, Susan Gray and Sam Coulbourn.** **Charmaine Blanchard, Betsy Giannoccaro and Laurie LePine** were absent. Also present were **Barbara Sparks, John Sparks and Gunilla Caulfield**, Trustee of the Lura Hall Philips Trust.

1. Bruce J. Anderson Foundation Grant. Shannon reported on our submission of a request for a grant of \$12,000, clarifying the fact that we were not using Essex County Community Foundation (ECCF) for "fiscal sponsorship" as that was not necessary.

2. ECCF. Members discussed the process of acknowledging gifts that are mailed directly to ECCF. Although donations made online are immediately acknowledged, it appears that donations by cash or check are reported to the charity (e.g. "Rockport Millbrook Meadow Fund") every two weeks. And there is a difference in donations of \$250 or more. Shannon will clarify this with ECCF.

Susan stated that of course we will solicit large donations in person, and therefore it will be clear how to acknowledge those at once.

We discussed what to do about donations sent directly to the Conservancy or MMC. Sam asked if Shannon would arrange a meeting with ECCF for us to discuss some of these items.

3. Fund Raising Letter. Susan sent a proposed revision to a fund raising letter drafted by Sam. Attendees agreed that this letter was much better. It will be sent with the brochure to potential donors. The latest version is attached. Members discussed providing a "response piece" such as a card with space for donor information, to include a check and inserted in an envelope.

4. Brochure. Barbara noted that some errors she had called out previously had reappeared. Sam found that he had provided the wrong version, and the errors had indeed been corrected. The correct version as it stands to date, is attached. Printing the brochure was discussed. Shannon

reported a quote from My Copy & Print for 200 pieces on 100# glossy stock, full color and folded would be \$157.50 while 400 pieces would be \$284. Marcia offered to inquire with a Seaside Graphics in Gloucester since she knows the owners about possible donating the work.

5. Large Donor Solicitations. Susan outlined the process: Conservancy will collect names of potential large donors (20-25 in total). We will call them and arrange to visit them. At those meetings we will briefly outline our program and solicit donations, and also solicit their ideas for raising funds. We will ask them for 5 more suggested names. We may ask some to hold small wine & cheese gatherings of their friends so that we may address them as well. If they do not wish us to visit, we will still ask for name suggestions. [Note: Large Donor Solicitations is a topic that causes many of us much heartburn. It is foreign territory, and we are uncomfortable about it. Shannon and Sam will schedule a separate meeting with Susan to discuss this process further.]

6. Website. The Conservancy web site is ready to go. As soon as we have voted to authorize the expenditure Laurie LePine can acquire the domain and transfer the site there. Barbara offered to provide her own contribution of the approximately \$100 to get started. Sam stated that any additions or changes can be made almost instantly. Members earlier had discussed obtaining help from Rockport High School students, but it appears that maintenance of the site is not complicated, and using students would require much more teaching and guiding and would not really be helpful.

7. Fund Raising Timeline. Susan said that based upon the project timeline, we need to have funds available by Spring 2015.

a. Gather, with each member presenting some ten (?) names or a total of 20-25 potential large donors.

b. Organize public relations campaign--- news stories which include mention of new website, etc. Arrange "My View" piece in Gloucester Daily Times. [Suggestion: Ask people like Rae Padilla Francoeur and Gail McCarthy in getting local press.] Plan news "pegs" or "angles" to use in stories, around Motif No. 1 Day, Visioning Session, Eel Awareness Day, Lura's potential donation, etc. This PR campaign will dovetail with campaign to raise voter awareness and support for Fall Town Meeting vote for Community Preservation funds.

c. Conduct mailing campaign of letters and brochures, with mail response piece.

d. Organize wine and cheese gatherings to tell our story and solicit donations.

e. Schedule presentations for local civic groups, like Rotary, to tell the story.

f. Organize a large event, such as a Strawberry Shortcake Social, (perhaps add champagne?) in the Meadow, with tent, small music group, presentation on history of the mills and ice farm, talk on trees, fauna, granite work, etc. in the Meadow and on the Pond. Sell tickets to this event, and promote it as an old-style dress up event. Perhaps collaborate with Garden Club or Sandy Bay Historical Society.

g. Work on piggybacking of other events in Town to tell the Meadow story, like Motif No. 1 Day, Harvest Festival, Acoustic Festival, etc. Discuss with program organizers how we can acquire mutual benefit by cross advertising.

h. Work with Eric to convert his eel awareness day into another more significant event, like several demonstrations by other nature people on related flora and fauna, personal stories. Give out buttons with our tagline, e.g. "Keep our Meadow **GREEN**", etc.

Arrange visit by John and Sam with Kim Clark to talk about Pond and access, get his historical knowledge, perhaps maps, and his sense of participation.

Organize individual brainstorming sessions with neighbors, like Beverly Robbins.

Susan warned: "Be careful about time!"

John reiterated how important a serious fund raising effort is toward convincing the Community Preservation Committee and voters that we are serious about this project.

8. Grant Applications. John stated that the Contractor, MMI, can be very helpful in steering us toward grants, but they will not actually do the paperwork for applying. Shannon reiterated the need to create a list of potential grants for application and deadline time frames. Susan indicated that ECCF has a grant database that should be available for research. [A separate meeting with Betsy Giannocarro, Marcia, Sam and Shannon will be scheduled to discuss this topic and other fundraising efforts.]

6. Set Next Meeting: To be determined. Shannon and other subcommittee members will hold small meetings on specific topics to get a better handle on the task at hand.

7. Adjourn 9:00 p.m.

Approved:

Shannon Mason

**Copy to: Town Administrator
Director of Public Works**

Attachments:

- 1. Draft Fund Raising Letter 02-12-14**
- 2. Draft Brochure as of 02-13-14**